

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

THE library of the University of North Carolina enjoys the distinction of being the oldest state university library in the United States. Its history, embracing a period of 114 years, is contemporaneous with that of the university, in whose varying fortunes it has shared.

From its foundation in 1795 to 1885 its book collection consisted of three parts, the university library proper and the libraries of the Dialectic and Philanthropic Literary Societies. These three parts were merged in 1885, and in 1905 were made to constitute the present library. In the latter year the university assumed complete charge of its administration and maintenance, and since then, though continuing to profit by the hearty co-operation of the societies, has conducted it as an active, effective university department.

The present library building, the gift of Mr. Andrew Carnegie, was completed in September, 1907. It was planned solely for library purposes, and after two years of thorough testing has proven splendidly adapted to the requirements made of it. It is situated on a beautifully terraced plot in the northwestern corner of the campus near the fraternity halls and faces east towards the Caldwell monument and Alumni Hall. It is of pepper and salt white pressed brick, with concrete trimmings, and fits well in the campus plan for other university buildings. Architecturally it is of the simple, pleasing classic style. Its long line of 124 feet on the front is relieved by a central projecting façade in which is the main entrance with ornamented arch and single window above and two-story panelled windows between pilasters to the right and left. The approach from the center of the campus is by means of a broad gravelled walk, which is crossed at right angles at the base of the terrace steps by a smaller one running lengthwise the building. Broad concrete steps lead from the terrace to the doorway and vestibule landing, from which another short flight leads to the central lobby or main hall of the building. On either side of the vestibule are curving stairways, which meet in a landing immediately above it and lead from it, in a broad short flight, to the second floor. In front, to the right and left of the stairs, are two small cloak rooms. To the right and left of the lobby, and occupying the entire main wings of the building, are the reference and reading rooms. Both are light and spacious and are equipped with heavy oak shelving, racks, tables and chairs especially adapted to their appropriate uses. They are separated from the lobby by a series of arched glass partitions and doors, which render them free from noise incident to passing in the lobby, but at the same time easy of supervision from the delivery desk. In the rear, to the left of the stack room, is the room for bound period-

icals; in the center, the stack room itself, and to the right, a narrow hallway leading to a side entrance and the librarian and cataloger's rooms. Between the vestibule and the entrance to the stack, slightly back of the center of the lobby, and at a point commanding a view of all entrances and stairs, is the delivery desk, with the card catalog at the right and a special reference case at the left. An abundance of light is admitted from the front and sides through the partitions and doors and from the roof through a large circular well in the second floor.

The stack is planned for three tiers of shelving, with two mezzanine glass floors and a book lift. It has a capacity of 110,000 volumes, which, supplemented by that of the other rooms of the building, will give the library a total capacity of 150,000 volumes. It is of fireproof construction throughout and is admirably lighted with 12 tall prism glass windows. In the northeast corner is a small vault equipped with metal vertical filing cases and shelving. It is designed to accommodate 50,000 sheets of manuscript and 1000 rare volumes.

On the second floor is a finely lighted gallery with eight special study rooms leading off at the front and the two ends. The large corner rooms at the right and left in the rear are devoted to the collection of works on North Carolina history and literature and the scientific exchanges of the *Journal of the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society*.

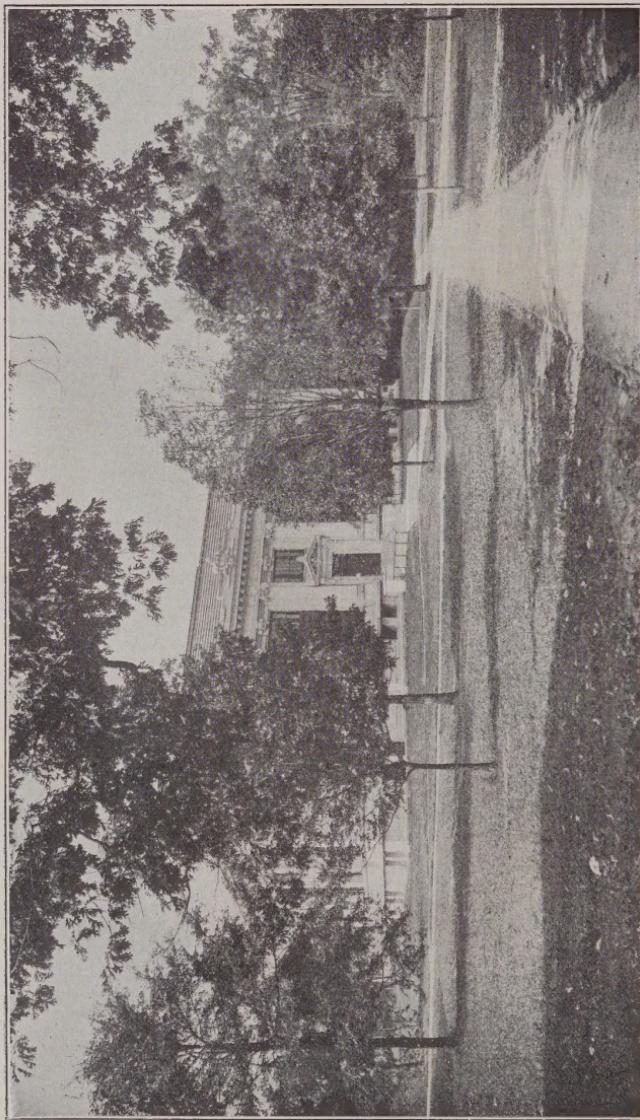
Lavatories, unpacking and storage rooms, and the heating plant are in the basement. Books are conveyed from the unpacking room to the cataloguing room above by means of a metal lift. Stairways run from the side hallway to the second floor and basement.

The building has a distinctive air of pleasantness and serviceableness. It is light and spacious; the walls and ceilings are tinted with delicate shades of green and yellow; the wood work is finished in dark mahogany; the furnishings are of fine, heavy quartered oak. It is heated by hot water and lighted by electricity. At present it represents the careful expenditure of \$60,000, and when the stack and seminar rooms are fully equipped will cost \$70,000.

From the beginning of the university, careful attention has been given to the selection of books, and, as a result the 55,000 volumes now in the library are unusually well adapted to the needs of the professor and student alike. Between 3000 and 4000 volumes are added annually to this collection, for the purchase of which an endowment fund, library fees, and a special university appropriation, amounting to \$10,000, are provided.

Three hundred and ninety periodicals are received regularly and placed at the service of the students in the large reading room or

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in the various seminar rooms and scientific laboratories in the university. Upon the completion of volumes, these are bound. As a result, the bound collection of periodicals thus accumulated through the years and added to through the purchase of entire back files is especially valuable and is by far the most complete to be found between Washington and New Orleans.

The general reference room is supplied with the newest and best encyclopædias, dictionaries, atlases, maps, etc., all of which have been chosen with the object of enabling the students to find desired information with the greatest dispatch. The North Carolina room contains 3000 volumes and pamphlets which are always at the disposal, not only of university students, but also of investigators throughout the state who are making a special study of North Carolina history and literature. To any one connected with the university and to visiting scholars, the library aims to make a definite contribution along both general and special lines.

To those who are preparing to teach in the public schools of the state, the library is especially helpful in offering a course in the

administration of school libraries. Book selection, debate helps, reading lists, indexing and similar topics with which the teacher should be familiar are carefully discussed in lectures and illustrated in practice in the general library.

The library has interests outside the campus as well as within. For the past five years it has taken an active part in the work of general library extension in the state and the South at large. It recognizes the great educational value of library privileges for every one, and through state association, state commission, educational conferences, and the A. L. A., has endeavored to secure them for the public generally.

In view of these facts it is evident that the library is of interest to the university and state not merely because of its history, or building, or book collection, however interesting these may be, but rather on account of the daily task it sets itself to do. It endeavors to touch the life of every student and teacher on the campus in a beneficial way, and to render the state and its citizenship generally a helpful, ever-broadening service.

LOUIS R. WILSON.

